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FOR

IMPROVEMENT

IN THE ART OF

READING.

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—— PLUS HABET OPERIS QUAM OSTENTATIONIS
QUINTIL.

By J. WALKER,
AUTHOR OF ELEMENTS OF ELOCUTION, RHYMING AND PRONOUNCING DICTIONARY, &c.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

PREFACE.

THE following hints have arisen from a long course of private instruction, and it is hoped, will not be without their use to the public. Those who understand the subject, know how difficult it is to reduce it to rules, and will not undervalue any endeavours to promote so desirable a purpose. While we deal in generals, we may please the ear, and amuse the imagination; but it is only by descending to particulars, that we can be useful. It is easy to expatiate on the charms of a good pronunciation, and to dwell on the

wonders

wonders it has performed; but he who conveys real inſtruction muſt come to the point, and tell us in what caſe we are to pronounce in one manner, and in what caſe, in another. Difficult, however, as ſuch a taſk may appear, the Author has been bold enough to undertake it; and he hopes not entirely without ſucceſs. The favorable reception of his late work on Elocution, flatters him, that he has in ſome meaſure met the wants of the public; and encourages him to hope, that the preſent little eſſay on the ſame ſubject, will not be leſs worthy of their acceptance.

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THE art of reading with juſtneſs, energy and eaſe, conſiſts chiefly in adopting as much as poſſible, the words of an author for our own, and pronouncing them as if they were conceived expreſsly for the preſent purpoſe; from which poſition it will neceſſarily follow, that thoſe readers are the beſt, who approach the neareſt to the beſt extemporary ſpeakers. If we enquire into the reaſon, why a perſon who delivers every

word of a long ſtory, with proper emphaſis and tones, would read the ſame ſtory, if taken down in ſhort hand, in a very faulty and unnatural manner; we need only advert to the operation of the mind in both caſes, to ſee an adequate cauſe of this difference. When we ſpeak our own words, we pronounce our thoughts in a direct manner, as it may be called. The *idea* ariſes firſt in the mind, and that elects the word by which to expreſs it; but in reading, the *word* ſuggeſts the idea, and produces the correſpondent ſenſibility of tone, in an inverted order. For in ſpeaking, the accompaniments of tone, emphaſis, and geſture, are immediately connected with the internal idea or ſentiment, and precede the words that expreſs them; and thus are the ſpontaneous and natural production of the mind: but in reading, the words precede the ideas, and by a retroſpection, only, is the mind capable of adapting a ſuitable expreſſion to them. In ſhort, in one caſe, feelings are the natural production of the mind, of which

words

words are only ſigns; in the other, the feelings are produced artificially, and dictated entirely and inſtantaneouſly by the words we read: So that thoſe who have the greateſt facility of making an author's words their own, are the beſt readers; or in other words, thoſe readers are the beſt, who can act the part of the author or ſpeaker moſt naturally.

It muſt not however be concluded, that thoſe who read as they ſpeak muſt neceſſarily read well: if when we ſpeak our own words we ſpeak well, we have in our poſſeſſion a good model for reading well; but if we happen not to ſpeak well, it will be in vain to tell us we muſt read as we ſpeak; if we ſpeak ill we muſt read ill: good reading, therefore, is not ſo much a picture of what ſpeaking *is*, as of what it *ought* to be.

As therefore reading and ſpeaking well, are reduced to the ſame principles, in treating on one we diſcuſs the other; and there will be little occaſion to diſtinguiſh the rules that are given for both. The firſt obſervation it will be requiſite to

make is, that a pure, diſtinct and articulate pronunciation, is the firſt, and moſt indiſpenſable requiſite of delivery: this ſhould be nicely attended to in the earlieſt youth, as nothing is ſo incurable in advanced life as a mumbling, cluttering, and defective articulation; a diſtinct, and at the ſame time, a delicate pronunciation, is the ſureſt ſign of an elaborate education: and the leaſt equivocal mark of early and habitual politeneſs. The illiterate, though they may be perfectly unexceptionable with reſpect to accent, have always a flimſineſs of articulation that betrays their ignorance of the ſpelling; and when they attempt to ſpeak words, which they have not heard very frequently pronounced, they fall into the errors we call *ſlops*; which is, a miſpronunciation of hard or uncommon words; and thoſe, who have had but few opportunities of hearing theſe affected and ignorant ſpeakers, are apt to think Fielding's character of Mrs. Slipſlop a romantic exaggeration.

With

With reaſon therefore, did the ancient rhetoricians lay ſuch uncommon ſtreſs, on a thorough knowledge of the elements of ſpeech, as on theſe they knew depended ſo much of the ſtrength and beauty of delivery. For there is as much difference in the pronunciation, even of common words, between thoſe who know the letters they are compoſed of, and thoſe who do not, as between a painter, who underſtands anatomy, and one who knows nothing of the human body beyond the ſurface: for as a ſkilful painter covers, but does not totally hide the muſcles of the body, ſo a perfect ſpeaker, even in the moſt careleſs and rapid pronunciation, gives a certain delicate hint of the exiſtence of the letters, which infallibly ſhows he is acquainted with the orthography of his language.

This diſtinctneſs of pronunciation however, does not conſiſt in pronouncing every ſyllable of a word exactly as it is ſpelt; or as theſe ſyllables would be ſounded, if they were ſo many diſtinct words, but in pronouncing decidedly and

firmly, what careleſs, and illiterate ſpeakers pronounce feebly and ambiguouſly. We muſt not, under a pretence of reſtoring diſtinctneſs to our language, alter its features and complexion. The Engliſh language, as neceſſarily exacts from us the moſt hiſſing, ſnapping, claſhing, ſplitting, grinding, and diſcordant ſounds in ſome words, as the Italian makes every thing yield to what is called Euphony. It is certain, that thoſe very words for which the vulgar inhabitants of London are ſo juſtly ridiculed, ſuch as Poſt-es, Toaſt-es, and Fiſt-es, are the reſult of a careleſsneſs of ſpeaking, joined to a delicacy of ear, which refuſes the violent hiſs, that is occaſioned by *s* being ſounded without an intervening vowel, when *ſt* precedes. Poſt-es, Toaſt-es, and Fiſt-es, with reſpect to their form, might be Latin and Greek words, but Poſts, Toaſts, and Fiſts are the genuine Engliſh terminations, which, however harſh, are the very vitals of the language; and cannot be touched without danger: and though the vulgar may chance to ſlide

into the eaſieſt and moſt harmonious ſounds, theſe ſounds muſt be avoided as the moſt unpardonable errors in ſpeaking. For whatever may be the rectitude of the vulgar with reſpect to moral and political principles, it is impoſſible they can be right in language, where they differ from their ſuperiors. Poſt-es, Toaſt-es, and Piſt-es muſt be avoided as carefully as falſe concord; and given, heaven, ſeven, muſt on no account have the *e* in the laſt ſyllable, pronounced as the vulgar do in London, giv-en, heav-en, ſev-en, though this latter is evidently the preferable ſound.

What is meant therefore by a pure, diſtinct, and articulate pronunciation of every ſyllable, is a clear, full, and delicate ſound, given to every part of the word, exactly in the ſtyle of the beſt ſpeakers; or ſuch a pronunciation as marks, and poliſhes the received ſounds, but does not alter them. But here, it will be ſaid, lies the difficulty. What are the received ſounds? Without entering into the intricate queſtion of the extent

extent of cuſtom, it may be anſwered, that thoſe ſounds which upon the whole are the moſt general, are the moſt received ſounds. Perhaps the moſt correct ſpeaker, in a few words, differs from the generality of good ſpeakers; but he is not on this account, to be called an inferior ſpeaker to theſe, becauſe they, by the very terms of the propoſition, are ſuppoſed to vary more from the generality of good ſpeakers than he does. Thus the pronunciation of London is certainly erroneous in many words, but upon being compared with that of any other place in the king's dominions, is undoubtedly the beſt: that is, not only the beſt by courteſy, and becauſe it happens to be the pronunciation of the capital, but beſt by a better right; that of being more generally received: or in other words, though the people of London are erroneous in the pronunciation of ſome words, the inhabitants of every other place are erroneous in many more: nay, harſh as the ſentence may ſeem, thoſe at a conſiderable diſtance from the capital, do not only miſpronounce many words

taken

taken ſeparately, but they ſcarcely pronounce a ſingle word, ſyllable or letter, with purity; for if the letter *U* for example as pronounced in London, differs from the ſound of that letter in the northern part of England, which it actually does, it neceſſarily follows that every word where that letter occurs muſt by thoſe provincials be miſpronounced.

I ſhall corroborate my argument with the opinion of a competent judge, who has with great depth, clearneſs, and vivacity, diſcuſſed this intricate queſtion. "It will "perhaps be found true upon enquiry, "notwithſtanding its paradoxical ap-"pearance, that though it be very un-"common to ſpeak or write pure Eng-"liſh, yet of all the idioms ſubſiſting "amongſt us, that to which we give the "character of purity is the commoneſt: "the faulty idioms do not jar more with "true Engliſh, than they do with one "another, ſo that in order to our being "ſatisfied of the truth of the apparent "paradox, it is requiſite only that we "remember, that theſe idioms are diverſe

"one

" one from another, though they come " under the common denomination of " impure. Thoſe who wander from the " road may be incomparably more than " thoſe who travel in it; and yet if it be " into a thouſand different bye-paths that " they deviate, there may not in any one " of theſe be found ſo many as thoſe " whom you will meet upon the King's " highway."—Campbell's Philoſ. of Rhetoric, book II. chap. I. p. 355.

But the grand difference between the metropolis and the provinces is, that people of education are free from all the vices of the vulgar in London, but the beſt educated people in the provinces, if conſtantly reſident there, are ſure to be ſtrongly tinctured with the diſtinctive dialect of the county in which they live; and if they do not err groſsly in the pronunciation of ſeparate words are infallibly infected with what is called an accent *, which though imperceptible to

* On the propriety of calling the Dialect of a Country the Accent of it, ſee Elements of Elocution, vol. II. p. 12.

to themſelves, is immediately detected by the Londoners. But I doubt not my readers will anticipate my determination, and ſuppoſe I have attempted a very needleſs taſk in proving what is ſo ſeldom denied; namely, that the educated and polite part of London are neceſſarily the ſtandard of pronunciation: After begging pardon, therefore, for the digreſſion, I muſt return to my ſubject, and take it for granted, that the firſt requiſite for reading or ſpeaking agreeably, is to be free from provincial pronunciation: the next, that every word ſhould be pronounced articulately and diſtinctly, without attempting to revive the ſound of conſonants in reading, which have been for centuries dead in ſpeaking. The auxiliary verbs *ſhall*, *would*, *could*, *ſhould*, *are*, and *have*, muſt never be pronounced *ſhawll*, *wold*, *cold*, *ſhold*, *air*, and *haive*, but *ſhal*, *wood*, *cood*, *ſhood*, *arr*, and *havv*, for as reading is a picture of ſpeaking, a perfect, though beautiful likeneſs muſt be preſerved; nor muſt we wonder at this long catalogue of words irregularly pronounced,

nounced, for when we conſider that they are all auxiliary verbs, which are as irregular in their conſtruction, as pronunciation, we ſhall be better reconciled to the anomaly.

From a want of conſidering the true object of reading, we find ignorant and formal readers preſerve the ſound of the participial *ed* in thoſe words where cuſtom has totally ejected it. It is agreeable to the genius of Engliſh pronunciation, to pronounce every final conſonant; but it is likewiſe agreeable to its genius, to multiply ſyllables as little as poſſible, when the numbers of nouns, and the perſons or tenſes of verbs, can be formed without it. Agreeably to this tendency, we find the third perſons of verbs exchanging the *th* for *s*; as he *readeth*, for he *reads*; he *writeth*, for he *writes*; the plural of *line* is formed by annexing *s*, as *lines*, without adding a ſyllable; and *tame*, forms its paſt time by ſounding *d* only, as if joined to *m*, without the intervention of *e*, as *tam'd*, and not *ta-med*. To

regret

regret that these words are not pronounced in two syllables, as, *writeth*, *readeth*, *li-nes*, *ta-med*, is to regret that our language is not so harmonious as the Greek or Italian; but to endeavour to pronounce them in two syllables instead of one, is overturning the most established idiom of our pronunciation. Perhaps there are no languages in the world that are not in some respects both redundant and deficient. Ours is remarkably sparing of letters and sounds that are not essential to sense. In English hardly any thing is sacrificed to sound*; and whether, as Mr. Addison humorously observes, this cropping of our participles is to be attributed to our natural

* I have sometimes made the experiment, in company with persons, whose ears were nicely set to pure English pronunciation, by proposing to them for their choice, the adjectives *oratorial* or *oratorical*, and have always found them prefer the latter. This can arise from nothing but too great a plenitude and rotundity of sound in the former word. For if we regard derivation only, the adjective ought to be *oratorial*, as derived immediately from the Latin *oratorius*, in the same manner as we form rhetorical from *rhetoricus*.

tural taciturnity, I know not; but certain it is, that an attempt to bring them into pronunciation in reading, when they are abſolutely exploded in converſation, is ſtriking at the root of true expreſſion; which requires whatever is read, to be as natural and cloſe to life as poſſible. One diſtinction indeed ſeems to have obtained between ſome adjectives and participles, which is, that of pronouncing the *ed* in an additional ſyllable in the former, and of ſinking it into the theme in the latter: thus when *learned*, *curſed*, and *bleſſed*, are adjectives, they are invariably pronounced in two ſyllables, but when participles in one; as *learn'd*, *curs'd*, *bleſs'd*. Poetry, however, aſſumes the privilege of uſing theſe adjectives either way, of which we have an example in Pope; as

Such labour'd nothings in ſo ſtrange a ſtyle,
Amaze th' *unlearn'd*, and make the *learned* ſmile.

but correct proſe rigidly exacts the pronunciation of *ed* in theſe words when adjectives, as a diſtinct ſyllable. This analogy, however, is preſerved in but very few words; for we have an almoſt infi-

nite

nite number of participial adjectives, where not the leaſt difference is made between their uſage as adjectives or participles; both falling into the common contraction of ſinking the *e* and annexing the conſonant to the root of the word, without increaſing the number of its ſyllables: It is worthy notice, however, that when theſe adjectives are changed into adverbs, by the addition of the termination *ly*, we often find the participial *ed* preſerved long and diſtinct, even in thoſe very words where it was contracted when uſed adjectively. Thus, though we always hear *confeſt*, *profeſs*, &c. we as conſtantly hear *confeſs-edly*, *profeſs-edly*, &c. This rule is not ſo general, as for ſound's ſake it ought to be; and prevails chiefly in thoſe words, where the accent is on the laſt ſyllable of the original word; for *illnaturedly*, *illfavouredly*, &c. carry their contraction into the adverb, and are pronounced as if written *illnatur'dly*, *illfavour'dly*, &c. It is difficult to draw the line between the vulgarity that is ever ſhortening and the pedantry

dantry that is ever prolonging ſyllables. Let us weigh ſounds in as nice ſcales as we will, good taſte is requiſite to know when we may depart from common modes of ſpeaking without the appearance of ſingularity; and when we may adopt them without the imputation of levity or vulgarity.

But whatever has been ſaid with reſpect to contracting the participial *ed*, it muſt not be extended to the language of ſcripture. There is a dignity and ſanctity in the word of God, which requires a pronunciation, as much removed from common ſpeaking, as the ſubject and language, is different from every human compoſition. Good taſte would be as much offended at the introduction of contractions into the language of the Bible, as it would be, to hear theſe ſyllables at length, in common converſation. Nor can thoſe who have a true ſenſe of the ſacred language bear to hear it lowered, by a ſlight and faſhionable pronunciation. How would the dignity of that pathetic addreſs of Wiſdom to

the ſons of men, in the firſt chapter of Proverbs be debaſed, by ſaying, *Wiſdom cries without, ſhe utters her voice in the ſtreets*; inſtead of *Wiſdom crieth without, ſhe uttereth her voice in the ſtreets*: and little leſs would the dignity of the language and ſentiment ſuffer by pronouncing that pathetic exclamation of Iſaiah: *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed!* as if it were written, *Who hath believ'd our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord reveal'd!*

Another very common error in reading ariſes from pronouncing ſome of the pronouns in the ſame manner, whether they are in the nominative or objective caſe; or in other words, whether they are the principal, or ſubordinate words in a ſentence. It is certain that the pronouns *you* and *my*, when they are contradiſtinguiſhed from other pronouns, and conſequently are emphatical, are always pronounced with their full, open ſound, *you*, *my*. But it is *as* certain, if we obſerve the pronunciation of correct con-

verſation, that we ſhall find them ſounded *ye* and *me*, when they are ſubordinate words in a ſentence, and have no emphaſis on them*. For example; You *told him all the truth*. Here the word you is a nominative caſe, that is, it goes before the word, denoting action, and muſt therefore be pronounced full and open—YOU—In this ſentence alſo, *He told* YOU *before he told any body elſe*; the word *you* is in the objective caſe, or comes after the word denoting action, but as it is

* That the perſonal pronouns as diſtinguiſhed from other perſonal pronouns, or without this diſtinction, had a very different pronunciation in the Greek language, may be eaſily ſeen in Harris's Hermes, book I. chap. 5. page 84. where we find that theſe pronouns when not contradiſtinguiſhed from any other, ſunk into the preceding word, and became enclitical. "This diverſity," ſays the ſame profound and ingenious author, "between the contradiſtinctive pronouns "and the enclitic, is not unknown even to the Engliſh tongue. For when we ſay *Give me content*, the "(Me) in this caſe is a perfect enclitic. But when "we ſay, *Give Me content*, *Give Him his thouſands*, "the (Me) and (Him) are no enclitics, but as they "ſtand in oppoſition, aſſume an accent of their own, "and ſo become the true ὀρθοτονούμενα."

is emphatical by being contradiſtinguiſhed from *any body elſe*, it preſerves its full, open ſound as before. But in the ſentence, *Though he told you, he had no right to tell you*; here the pronoun *you* is in the objective caſe, or follows the word denoting action, and having no diſtinctive emphaſis, invariably falls into the ſound of the antiquated form of this pronoun *ye*: for every correct ear would immediately revolt at pronouncing it in this manner, "Though he told *you*, he had no right to tell *you*," as we never hear it ſo pronounced in converſation, or in the moſt ſolemn extempore ſpeaking. Neither can it here be pretended that in this laſt inſtance the pronoun *you* is only ſounded obſcurely. Every ſound between *you* and *ye* is intolerable; as, *Though he told yuh, he had no right to tell yuh*: this is much worſe than the plain open ſound of *you*, and muſt be much more carefully avoided: but certainly, if we are to truſt our ears in this caſe, we muſt pronounce *you* in this ſituation exactly as

if written *ye*; as, *Though he told* YE, *he had no right to tell* YE.

The ſame obſervations hold good with reſpect to the pronoun *my*. If we were to ſay, *My pen is as bad as my paper*, we ſhould neceſſarily pronounce *my* like *me*, as, in this ſentence, pen and paper are the emphatical words; but if I were to ſay, *my* pen is worſe than *your's*, *my* here is in antitheſis with *your's*, and conſequently pronounced long and full. The word, *your*, is exactly under the ſame predicament. When the emphaſis is upon this word, it is always pronounced full and open as *your*: as, *The moment I had read* YOUR *letter I ſat down to write* MINE: but when it is not emphatical, it ſinks naturally into *yur*; as, *I had juſt anſwered yur firſt letter as yur laſt arrived.* On the contrary, if it were to be ſaid, *I had juſt anſwered* YOUR *firſt letter as* YOUR *laſt arrived*, every delicate ear would be offended.

A few examples may ſerve to illuſtrate theſe obſervations ſtill farther.

" Your

" Your paper is a part of my tea equi-
" page; and my ſervant knows my hu-
" mour ſo well, that calling for my break-
" faſt this morning (it being paſt my
" uſual hour) ſhe anſwered, the Spectator
" was not yet come in."—Spect. No. 92.

In this example we find every *my* but the laſt may be pronounced ſo as to rhyme with *high*, and it would intimate the ſingularity of the tea-equipage, the ſervant, and the humour, as oppoſed to, or diſtinguiſhed from, thoſe who have no ſuch tea-equipage, ſervant or humour: but breakfaſt, having no ſuch ſingularity or oppoſition of meaning to other breakfaſts, cannot have *my* before it pronounced like *high* without being abſurd. Not that the ſenſe neceſſarily requires the full ſound of *my* before the former words, but admits of it only; nay, the repetition of this ſound being diſagreeable to the ear, and the ſenſe not demanding it, perhaps the beſt mode of reading this paſſage would be to confine the full ſound of *my* to that which precedes the word humour. *Your* at the beginning of the

ſentence, requires the full ſound rhyming with *pure*; as it diſtinguiſhes the Spectator from other papers, but in the following part of the ſame letter: "Having "thus in part, ſignified the eſteem and "veneration which I have for you, I "muſt put you in mind of the catalogue "of books, which you have promiſed to "recommend to our ſex: for I have de-"ferred furniſhing my cloſet with au-"thors, till I receive your advice in this "particular, being your daily diſciple, "and humble ſervant,

"*Leonora.*"

However we may pronounce the word *your* preceding the word advice, the laſt *your* muſt neceſſarily be pronounced ſhort like *yur*. This ſound of the poſſeſſive pronoun *your* always takes place where it is uſed to ſignify any particular ſpecies of perſons or things. Thus Addiſon, ſpeaking of the metaphors which profeſſional men moſt commonly fall into, ſays, "*Your* men of buſineſs uſually have re-"courſe to ſuch inſtances as are too "mean and familiar."—Spect. No. 421.

And

And Cleopatra, in All for Love, ſpeaking the Roman poets, ſays,

——Mere poetry.
Your Roman wits; your Gallus and Tibullus
Have taught ye this from Cytheris and Delia.

From what has been already obſerved of theſe pronouns, we are naturally led to ſuppoſe, that the word *thy*, when not emphatical, ought to follow the ſame analogy, and be pronounced like *the*, as we conſtantly hear it on the ſtage: but if we reflect that reading or reciting is a perfect picture of ſpeaking, we ſhall be induced to think that in this particular the ſtage is wrong. The ſecond perſonal pronoun *thy*, is not like *my*, the common language of every ſubject; it is uſed only where the ſubject is either raiſed above common life, or ſunk below it into the mean and familiar. When the ſubject is elevated above common life, it adopts a language ſuitable to ſuch an elevation, and the pronunciation of this language ought to be as far removed from the familiar as the language itſelf. Thus, in prayer, pronouncing *thy* like *the*, even when

when unemphatical, would be intolerable: while ſuffering *thy*, when unemphatical, to ſlide into *the* in the pronunciation of ſlight and familiar compoſition, ſeems to lower the ſound to the language, and form a proper diſtinction between different ſubjects. If therefore it ſhould be aſked, why in reciting epic or tragic compoſiton, we ought always to pronounce *thy* rhyming with *high*, while *my*, when unemphatical, ſinks into the ſound of *me*, it may be anſwered, becauſe *my* is the common language of every ſubject, while *thy* is confined to ſubjects either elevated above common life, or ſunk a little below it into the negligent and familiar. When therefore, the language is elevated, the uncommonneſs of the word *thy*, and its full ſound rhyming with *high*, is ſuitable to the dignity of the ſubject: but the ſlender ſound like *the* gives it a familiarity only ſuitable to the language of endearment or negligence, and for this very reaſon is unfit for the dignity of epic or tragic compoſition. Thus in the following paſſages from Milton:

Say

Say firſt, for heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of hell ———

Parad. Loſt, b. 1.

O thou, that with ſurpaſſing glory crown'd,
Look'ſt from thy ſole dominion, like the God
Of this new world; at whoſe ſight, all the ſtars
Hide their diminiſh'd heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O ſun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams.

Parad. Loſt, b. 4.

Here pronouncing the pronoun *thy*, like the word *the*, would familiarize and debaſe the language to proſe. The ſame may be obſerved of the following paſſage from the Tragedy of Cato.

Now, Cæſar, let thy troops beſet our gates,
And bar each avenue; thy gathering fleets
O'erſpread the ſea, and ſtop up ev'ry port;
Cato ſhall open to himſelf a paſſage,
And mock thy hopes ———

Here the impropriety of pronouncing *thy* like *the* is palpable: nor would it be much more excuſable in the following ſpeech of Portius, in the firſt ſcene of the ſame Tragedy.

Thou ſee'ſt not that thy brother is thy rival;
But I muſt hide it, for I know thy temper.
Now, Marcus, now thy virtue's on the proof;

Put

Put forth thy utmoſt ſtrength, work ev'ry nerve,
And call up all thy father in thy ſoul:——

As this pronoun is generally pronounced on the ſtage, it would be difficult for the ear to diſtinguiſh whether the words are

Thou know'ſt not that *thy* brother is *thy* rival—or
Thou know'ſt not that *the* brother is *the* rival, *&c.*

and this may be one reaſon why the ſlender pronunciation of *thy* ſhould be avoided as much as poſſible.

Perhaps it will be urged, that though theſe paſſages require *thy* to be pronounced ſo as to rhyme with *high*, there are other inſtances in tragedy where the ſubject is low and familiar, which would be more ſuitably pronounced by ſounding *thy* like *the*: to which it may be anſwered, when tragedy lowers her voice, and deſcends into the mean and familiar, as is frequently the caſe in the tragedies of Shakeſpeare, the ſlender pronunciation of *thy* may be adopted, becauſe, though the piece may have the name of a tragedy, the ſcene may be really comedy. The only rule, therefore, that can be given, is

a very

a very indefinite one; namely, that *thy* ought always to be pronounced ſo as to rhyme with *high* when the ſubject is raiſed, and the perſonage dignified: but when the ſubject is familiar, and the perſon we addreſs, without dignity or importance, if *thy* is the perſonal pronoun made uſe of, it ought to be pronounced like *the*: Thus, if in a familiar way, we ſay to a friend, *Give me thy hand*, we never hear the pronoun *thy* ſounded ſo as rhyme with *high*: and it is always pronounced like *the* when ſpeaking to a child; we ſay, *Mind thy book*, *Hold up thy head*, or, *Take off thy hat*. The phraſeology we call *thee and thouing* is not in ſo common uſe with us as the *tutoyant* among the French: but as the ſecond perſonal pronoun *thou*, and its poſſeſſive *thy* is indiſpenſable in compoſition, it ſeems of ſome importance to pronounce them properly.

A diſtinction ſimilar to thoſe we have been obſerving ſeems to have taken place in the pronunciation of the prepoſition *of*. The conſonant of this word is al-

moſt

moſt invariably pronounced like the conſonant *v*, and when the word does not come before ſome of the pronouns at the end of a ſentence, or member of a ſentence, we ſometimes ſuffer the vowel *o* to ſlide into the ſound of the vowel *u*, and the word may be ſaid to rhyme with *love*, *dove*, &c. Thus, in the well-known couplet in the Fair Penitent,

Of all the various wretches love has made,
How few we find by men of ſenſe betray'd!

The two *of*'s in this couplet we find may, without any very palpable departure from propriety be pronounced as if written *uv*; rhyming with *dove*, &c. but when the word *it*, follows *of*, either in the middle, or at the end of a ſentence, the word *of* muſt then be pronounced as when heard ſingly, rhyming with the firſt ſyllable of *nov-el*, *hov-el*. Thus every ear will readily perceive the impropriety of reciting the following ſentence in this manner, *We never know the true value of time 'till we are deprived uv it*. And the ſuperior meaning as well as harmony of this manner, *We never know the true va-*

lue

lue of time 'till we are deprived OF *it.* The ſame obſervations hold good with reſpect to the words *from*, *by*, *for*, and every word that in certain poſitions may admit of a leſs diſtinct and emphatical ſound: for we may allowably pronounce *from* as if written *frum* in the ſentence, *I delivered him* FROM *the danger he was in*; but we muſt always pronounce it FROM in the ſentence, *I delivered him* FROM *it.* The word *by*, is liable alſo to a double ſound in different ſituations, that is, ſometimes like the verb *be*, and ſometimes like the word *buy*, as we may ſay either, "he died by *(be)* his own hands;" or, "he died by *(buy)* his own hands:" but we muſt neceſſarily pronounce it *(buy)* when it comes before the word *it*, *him*, or any ſimilar word at the end of a ſentence; as, "whatever was the *weapon*, he died by *(buy)* it." In the ſame manner we may ſay, *I wrote to a friend for* (fur) *his advice:* but we muſt invariably ſay, *He would not give me his advice though I wrote for* (faur) *it.* In theſe inſtances we plainly perceive that there is ſomething left to taſte, and ſomething

thing eſtabliſhed by cuſtom. But notwithſtanding the little hold we have of the fleeting and volatile ſounds that convey to us theſe leſs important words in a ſentence, we have ſtill ſufficient perception of them for eſtabliſhing this general rule. When theſe ſigns of caſes *of*, *from*, *by*, *for*, are in the middle of a ſentence, they are ſometimes liable to a double ſound, but when at the end of a ſentence, and preceded by *it*, *him*, *her*, or *them*, are invariably pronounced as when heard ſingly *of*, *from*, *by*, *for*, &c. To which obſervations we may add, that though theſe prepoſitions and pronouns, at the end of a ſentence or member of a ſentence, are pronounced diſtinctly, yet they muſt always be pronounced feebly, that is, in ſubordination to the word immediately preceding, which in this caſe has generally ſuch a ſtreſs as to make the prepoſition and its complement (what Mr. Harris would call) *enclitical*: It muſt however be underſtood, that when theſe words are in oppoſition to others, and conſequently emphatical, they have force

as

as well as distinctness, and sink into feebleness, only when emphatical. Thus when there is a question about speaking for, or against a person, we say, "*I neither spoke* FOR *him, nor* AGAINST *him*:" where the two prepositions being emphatical, have emphatic force: but when we say, "*I neither* SPOKE *for him, nor* ACTED *for him.*" Here *spoke* and *acted* are the emphatical words, and the preposition and pronoun, though distinct, sink into a comparative feebleness.

Again—Readers are sometimes not a little embarrassed about laying an emphasis on the adverb *not*. As when we barely affirm, we not make use of the auxiliary verb *do*; so when we barely deny, or rather affirm a negative sentence, we do not lay any stress on the negation. Thus barely to affirm we love, we lay no emphasis on the word love, as, *I love Homer better than Virgil.* But if we express an uncommon degree of love, we immediately adopt the auxiliary verb *do*, and lay the emphasis upon it; as, *I* DO *love Homer better than Virgil.* In the same man-

manner as we always introduce the auxiliary verb *do*, to expreſs a negation, if this negation is ſimple and without emphaſis, we lay no ſtreſs on the word *not*, but give what ſtreſs there is in the ſentence to the auxiliary that precedes it, as, *I* DO *not affirm that Milton is ſuperior to Homer*. Nay, if the negative ſentence be ever ſo emphatical, if it is not in direct oppoſition to ſome affirmative ſentence either expreſſed or underſtood, the ſtreſs is conſtantly laid on the affirmative part of the ſentence, as it ſeems rather to imply a ſtrong affirmation of a negative than a ſtrong denial of an affirmative. Thus, Othello expreſſing his confidence in the fidelity of Deſdemona with the utmoſt warmth and energy, ſays, *I* DO *not think but Deſdemona's honeſt*; and not, *I do* NOT *think but Deſdemona's honeſt*. But if a preceding affirmation had made a denial neceſſary, the emphaſis, in that caſe, would have been laid upon the word *not*. Thus if Iago had ſaid, *I'm ſure you think that Deſdemona's honeſt*. Othello, in that caſe, if he had thought otherwiſe, would have laid

laid an emphaſis on the word *not*, and ſaid, *No, I do* NOT *think that Deſdemona's honeſt.*

To ſum up, therefore, what has been ſaid in a few words; as a ſimple poſitive propoſition is without *do*, as, *I write for fame*; and an emphatical one with *do*, as, *I do write for fame*, ſo a ſimple negative propoſition lays no ſtreſs on *not*, as, *I do not write for fame*; but an emphaſis on *not* is neceſſary in an emphatical negative propoſition, as, *I do not write for fame, but for bread.* Thus we ſee each degree of affirmation and negation has its characteriſtic difference, a difference founded not merely on cuſtom, but on the nature of things. The wants of men are conſtantly, though inſenſibly, urging them to diſtinctions in language, which though at firſt ſight they may appear vague and capricious, are generally found, upon a nearer inſpection, to be the reſult of what may not improperly be called an inſtinctive and vernacular propriety. From theſe obſervations we may conclude, that the negative commands with *not*, in the de-

calogue, ought to have no ſtreſs on the negation. Thus, *Thou ſhalt not kill*; *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery*; *Thou ſhalt not ſteal*; *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs*, &c. ought all to be ſo pronounced as to have a greater ſtreſs on *ſhalt* than *not*. The ſame may be obſerved of the negative clauſe in the Lord's Prayer, *Lead us not into temptation*, where we ought not to lay a ſtreſs upon *not*, becauſe it is but a ſimple negative propoſition, and an emphaſis on this word would ſeem to imply a deſire to be led into ſomething elſe, though not into temptation; whereas the ſubſequent clauſe, *but deliver us from evil*, aſſumes a different verb, which ſhews that the two whole propoſitions are in oppoſition to each other, and not a part of them only; nearly in the ſame manner as in the following addreſs to a perſon leaving us: *Go not into the capital, but continue at a diſtance from it*, laying the ſtreſs on *not* would imply an advice to go to ſome other place, though not to the capital, which implication is at variance with the word continue, as this is

put

put in oppoſition to go. The ſame may be obſerved of the words *lead*, and *deliver*, and the ſame reaſon holds good in both ſentences. Two oppoſed propoſitions which belong to the ſame verb, are under a different predicament; in this caſe, the negative muſt be emphatical, as it ſtands in direct oppoſition to the poſitive. Thus, where Mr. Locke obſerves, *Grammar being to teach men, not to ſpeak, but to ſpeak correctly: where rhetoric is not neceſſary, Grammar may be ſpared.* The word *teaches*, in the former part of this ſentence agrees with the two phraſes, *not to ſpeak*, and, *but to ſpeak correctly*; the word *not*, therefore, muſt be emphatical: but in the latter part of the ſentence, the verbs in the two clauſes are different and conſequently the *not* is not emphatical. This part of the ſentence ſeems aptly to illuſtrate what has been before inculcated: if we lay a ſtreſs upon *not*, it will imply: where rhetoric is *not* neceſſary, ſomething elſe *is*, contrary to the plain import of the words. Thus we often ſee, that, by endeavouring to ſqueeze out

more ſenſe from a ſentence than it really contains, we bring out unmeaning and contrary ſenſes, which obſcure and weaken the thought.

The participial termination *ing* is frequently a cauſe of embarraſsment to readers who have a deſire to pronounce correctly; nor is it eaſy to ſolve the difficulty. We are told even by teachers of Engliſh, that *ing* in the words *ſinging*, *bringing*, and *ſwinging*, muſt be pronounced with the ringing ſound which is heard when the accent is on theſe letters, in words of one ſyllable, as, *king*, *ſing*, and *wing*, and not as if written without the *g*, as, *ſingin*, *bringin*, *ſwingin*. No one can be a greater advocate than I am for the ſtricteſt adherence to orthography, as long as the public pronunciation pays the leaſt attention to it; but when, from the niceſt obſervation of the beſt ſpeakers, I find letters given up, with reſpect to ſound, I then conſider them as cyphers. It is from obſervation I can aſſert, that our beſt ſpeakers, do not invariably pronounce the participial *ing* ſo

as

as to rhyme with *ſing*, *king*, and *ring*, but ſometimes only as the prepoſition *in*. In the firſt place, whenever the verb ends with *ing*, as, to *ſing*, to *bring*, or to *fling*, the repetition of the ringing ſound in the ſyllables immediately following each other would have a very bad effect on the ear, and inſtead of *ſinging*, *bringing*, or *flinging*, our beſt ſpeakers univerſally pronounce them *ſingin*, *bringin*, and *flingin*: for the very ſame reaſon we ought to admit the ringing ſound when the verb ends with *in*; for if, inſtead of *ſinning*, *pinning*, and *beginning*, we ſhould pronounce *ſinnin*, *pinnin*, and *beginnin*, we ſhould fall into the ſame diſguſting repetition as in the former examples. That *ing* ſhould not always have its ringing ſound when a participial termination is not very wonderful when we conſider, how much it is the cuſtom of pronunciation, to ſhorten and obſcure vowels, in final ſyllables, that are not under the ſtreſs; what a trifling omiſſion is the *g* after *n* in theſe ſyllables, to the mutilation of

oient in the plurals of French verbs into *a:* but trifling as it is, it ſavours too much of vulgarity to omit it in any words but where the ſame ſound immediately precedes, as in *ſingin*, *bringin*, *ſlingin*, &c. without ſaying any thing of the ambiguity it may poſſibly form by confounding it with the prepoſition *in*. *Writing*, *reading*, and *ſpeaking*, therefore, are certainly preferable to *writin*, *readin*, and *ſpeakin*, wherever the language has the leaſt degree of preciſion or ſolemnity. Writers on this ſubject commonly content themſelves, with referring us to the practice of the beſt ſpeakers; and without all queſtion this is the principal object of attention; but with the ſame advice that others give, I have attempted to add a few rules by way of rendering the advice more uſeful.

To theſe obſervations may be added ſome rules for removing difficulties that frequently ariſe in reading verſe. Cuſtom has in all ages adopted an orthography in poetry, which ſerves to diſtinguiſh the exact quantity of the verſe, where there

there are ſome words which may be pronounced with more or fewer ſyllables; thus the vowel *e* before *n* in an unaccented ſyllable is generally ſo feebly pronounced, as to ſink into the preceding ſyllable, and to loſe entirely its metrical quantity: Thus *heaven*, *given*, &c. never form but one ſyllable in poetry.

Both muſt alike from heav'n derive their light,
Theſe born to judge, as well as thoſe to write.
Pope.

Sleep hath forſook and giv'n me o'er
To death's benumbing opium as my only cure.
Milton.

This ſeems to be pretty generally underſtood; but the word *even* having ſometimes a contracted proſaic pronunciation, as if written *e'en*, we not unfrequently hear unjudicious readers of verſe give this ſound to the word *ev'n*, and plead in their juſtification the rights of verſe, which indiſpenſably requires this word to be pronounced in one ſyllable. To theſe it may be obſerved, that in pronouncing the word *ev'n*, and preſerving the ſound of *v*, we no more violate the laws of

metre than in the words *heav'n*, *giv'n*, &c. and that the word *e'en* has contracted ſo proſaic and familiar a ſound as ſcarcely to be allowable any where but in the language of converſation.

He might *even* as well employed his time, as ſome Princes have done, in the frivolous and low delights of catching moles.—Atterbury.

Since you refined the notion and corrected the malignity, I ſhall *e'en* let it paſs.—Collier.

By the very indifferent ſound this word has in theſe proſaic examples, we may judge of the impropriety of uſing this contraction in reading verſe; therefore, though we ſink the *e* in the pronunciation of the laſt ſyllable of this word, we muſt always preſerve the *v*, which it is evident does not neceſſarily make the word more than one ſyllable of verſe.

The vowel *e*, which is ſo often cut off by an apoſtrophe in the word *the*, and in unaccented ſyllables before *r*, as, *dang'rous*, *gen'rous*, &c. ought alſo to be preſerved in the pronunciation, becauſe the ſyllable it forms is ſo ſhort as to admit of being ſounded with the preceding ſyllable, ſo as not to increaſe the number of

ſyl-

ſyllables to the ear, or hurt the harmony.

'Tis hard to ſay, if greater want of ſkill
Appear in writing, or in judging ill:
But of the two, leſs dang'rous is th' offence
To tire our patience, than miſlead our ſenſe.
Pope.

——Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' etherial ſky,
With hideous ruin and combuſtion down
To bottomleſs perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durſt defy th' Omnipotent to arms.

In theſe examples we ſee the particle *the* may either form a diſtinct ſyllable or not. In the third line from Pope, the firſt *the* forms a diſtinct ſyllable, but the ſecond is ſunk into the ſucceeding noun. The ſame may be obſerved of this particle in the paſſage from Milton; but what appears ſomewhat ſtrange is, that though the particle *the* before a vowel, and ſhortened by an apoſtrophe, does not augment the number of ſyllables, it is really pronounced longer than in thoſe lines where it is not thus ſhortened by eliſion. This is apparent in the pronunciation of the third line from Pope,

But

But of the two leſs dang'rous is th' offence.

The reaſon why the firſt particle, though pronounced ſhorter than the ſecond, forms a ſyllable, and the ſecond does not, ſeems to ariſe from the greater impulſe of the breath on the *th* in the former caſe than in the latter; when a conſonant follows the particle *the*, we find two diſtinct impulſes, though the *e* is dropped; but when a vowel follows *the*, the impulſe on *the* ſlides over, as it were, to the conſonant of the ſucceeding ſyllable, without forming two diſtinct impulſes, nearly as if the word were written, *th' yof-fence*, *th' Yom-nipotent*, &c. It is not perhaps unworthy obſervation too, that when we pronounce proſe, we hear *e* in the particle *the* much more diſtinctly when it comes before a word beginning with a vowel, than before one that begins with a conſonant; as is perceptible in comparing *the pen*, *the hand*, &c. with *the oil*, *the air*, &c.

The ſame obſervations, in every reſpect, hold good in the pronunciation of the prepoſition *to*, which ought always

to

to be ſounded long, like the adjective *two*; however it may be printed, whether as we ſee it in Pope's Eſſay on Man,

Say what the uſe were finer optics giv'n,
T'inſpect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?

or in Milton,

For ſtill they knew and ought to'have ſtill remember'd
The high injunction not to taſte that fruit,
Whoever tempted. — — —

But one of the moſt puzzling varieties we meet with in reading verſe, is that occaſioned by the poet's placing a word in ſuch a part of the line as to demand an alteration of its uſual accent. It is one of the moſt general rules in reading, that every word is to have the ſame accent in verſe as it has in proſe. This rule, however, admits of ſome few exceptions. Many of our good poets have ſometimes placed words ſo unfavourably for pronunciation in the common way, that the ear would be leſs diſguſted with an alteration of the accent for the ſake of harmony, than with a preſervation of the accent with harſhneſs and diſcord. For in ſome caſes, by preſerving the accent,

we

we do not only reduce the lines to proſe, but to very harſh and diſagreeable proſe. Thus, the angel in Milton, reaſoning with Adam about the planets, ſays,

> For ſuch vaſt room in nature unpoſſeſs'd
> By living ſoul, deſert and deſolate,
> Only to ſhine, yet ſcarce to contribute
> Each orb a glimpſe of light convey'd ſo far
> Down to this habitable, which returns
> Light back to them, is obvious to diſpute.
>
> Par. Loſt, b. viii. v. 153.

The word *contribute* has unqueſtionably the accent on the ſecond ſyllable, but the verſe would be ſo harſh with this accent, that it is preſumed that a good reader, would, for the ſake of ſound, lay the principal ſtreſs on the firſt ſyllable, and a ſubordinate one on the third. Sometimes, however, there is not the ſame neceſſity for departing from common pronunciation, and when this is the caſe, the word ought to have its uſual accent, though it is not quite ſo agreeable to the ear as that which the poet has given; for we muſt not diſturb the attention by introducing an unuſual accent,

unleſs

unleſs the attention would be more diſturbed, and the ear more hurt by an unexpected proſaic harſhneſs.

Leſs bright the moon,
But oppoſite in level'd weſt was ſet
His mirror, with full face, borrowing her light
From him, for other light ſhe needed none;
In that aſpect, and ſtill that diſtance keeps
'Till night; then, in the eaſt, her turn ſhe ſhines.

In the fifth line of this paſſage, we find the verſe require the accent on the ſecond ſyllable of *aſpect*, contrary to preſent uſage, though the common uſage in Shakeſpeare's time; but as the verſe will run tolerably ſmooth with the accent on the firſt ſyllable, in my opinion, this accent ought to be preſerved in the reading. But it will be demanded, is the ear the only rule when we are to pronounce one way and when another? It may be anſwered, this is the beſt rule for thoſe who have good ears, but like moſt of the rules given us on this ſubject, amounts to no rule at all. To offer ſomething like a rule, where there was none, will not be unacceptable to thoſe whoſe ears are not ſuf-

ſufficiently delicate to direct themſelves. It may therefore be laid down as a good, general rule, that if words whoſe accent is at variance with the verſe come before the principal pauſe in the line or cæſura, as it is called, the accent ought to preſerve the ſame place it has in proſe; but if theſe words come after the pauſe, the accent is to be altered, and the word ſo pronounced as to make the verſe harmonious. This rule is exemplified in the two foregoing examples; and may be ſtill farther ſhown by comparing the ſecond line of the firſt paſſage from Milton, with the ſecond of the following paſſage.

He ſcarce had ſaid, when the bare earth, 'till then
Deſert and bare, unſightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender graſs. — — —

The word *deſert*, in this paſſage, ought to have the accent on the firſt ſyllable, both becauſe that ſyllable has the accent in proſe, and that this accentuation is agreeable to the harmony of the verſe; but in the following line,

By living ſoul, deſert and deſolate ——

the ſame word is beyond the principal pauſe,

pauſe, and therefore ought to have the accent on the ſecond ſyllable. The ſame may be obſerved of the word *obſcene*, in the following line of Milton.

Next Chemos, th' obſcene dread of Moab's ſons —

where we ought unqueſtionably to place the accent on the firſt ſyllable. Nor can we heſitate a moment at placing the accent on the firſt ſyllable of *expert*, in the following line of Pope.

Then fell Scamandrius, expert in the chace.

and on the laſt of *uproar*, in Milton.

— — — — Hell ſcarce holds the wild uproar.

But when the word is before the princical pauſe, it ſeems better to preſerve the common accent, which though it roughens, does not entirely deſtroy the verſe. Thus, Pope, in his Eſſay on Criticiſm, ſpeaking of a true critic, ſays,

But where's the man, who counſel can beſtow,
Still pleas'd to teach, and yet not proud to know?
* * * * * * * * * * *
Bleſt with a taſte exact, yet unconfin'd,
A knowledge both of books and human kind;

Gen'rous

Gen'rous converſe; a ſoul exempt from pride,
And love to praiſe with reaſon on his ſide?

Where, though the laſt line but one is extremely harſh, we muſt ſtill keep the accent on the firſt ſyllable of *converſe*: and for the ſame reaſon there is no neceſſity for laying the accent on the firſt ſyllable of *Ægean*, as marked in our beſt editions of Milton.

— — — and with the ſetting ſun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling ſtar
On Lemnos, th' Ægean iſle: thus they relate
Erring; — — —

I ſhall conclude theſe obſervations with remarking, that the adverb *ere* (before) and *e'er*, the contraction of *ever* (at any time) are always pronounced like the noun *air*: *never*, alſo, when contracted into *ne'er*, is an exact rhyme to the former words, and pronounced as if written, *nair*. This is the conſtant method of pronouncing theſe words on the ſtage; which, upon the whole, muſt certainly be acknowledged to be the beſt teſt of what is agreeable to the public ear, and conſequently, the beſt authority in pronunciation.

On

On the PAUSES, EMPHASIS, *and* INFLEXIONS *of the* VOICE.

AFTER every word is pronounced with its proper ſound and accent, which is the buſineſs of grammar; and to certain words are given a peculiar ſound, according to their place and import in the ſentence, which has been the object of the foregoing obſervations; we are naturally led to the pauſes and turns of voice which words require, when arranged into ſentences, and members of ſentences, as they conſtitute a regular diſcourſe. Here we find ourſelves in a large field, without any other guide, than what appears in our printed books; and how uncertain and deficient theſe are, is pretty generally acknowledged. But inſtead of declaiming againſt the punctuation in uſe, I ſhall endeavour to improve it. It is certain that the great error of punctuation, does not lie ſo much in placing the points wrong, as in neglecting to inſert them where they are neceſ-

ſary. Every one, therefore, who wiſhes to read well, ought to multiply pauſes, as much as the ſenſe will permit; and this, without exaggeration, may be affirmed to be the caſe, twice as often, as we meet with them, in our beſt printed books. This frequency of pauſing, will lead the reader into a deliberateneſs, a diſtinctneſs, and preciſion of pronunciation, equally eaſy to himſelf, and pleaſant to his hearer.

To the common doctrine of punctuation to be found in every grammar, I ſhall add a few hints which have ariſen chiefly from my own obſervation; and if the reader wiſhes to ſee the reaſons on which they are founded, he may conſult a work publiſhed not long ſince, called Elements of Elocution, where he will find the ſubject more fully treated than in any other work in our language.

1. Every ſentence beginning with a participle of the preſent tenſe, as, *having*, *ſpeaking*, &c. or a conjunction, as, *if*, *as*, *although*, &c. has two principal conſtructive parts, and at the end of the firſt

firſt part, or in the middle of the ſentence, as it may be called, is the longeſt pauſe to be inſerted.

If the products of nature riſe in value according as they more or leſs reſemble thoſe of art——we may be ſure that artificial works receive a greater advantage from their reſemblance of ſuch as are natural. Spect. 414.

If where the rules not far enough extend,
(Since rules were made but to promote their end)
Some lucky licence anſwer to the full
Th' intent propos'd—that licence is a rule.
Pope's Eſſay on Crit.

Having already ſhown how the fancy is affected by the works of nature, and afterwards conſidered in general both the works of nature and of art, how they mutually aſſiſt and complete each other in forming ſuch ſcenes and proſpects as are moſt apt to delight the mind of the beholder——I ſhall in this paper throw together ſome reflections on that particular art which has a more immediate tendency than any other to produce thoſe primary pleaſures of the imagination, which have hitherto been the ſubject of this diſcourſe. Spect. No. 415.

In theſe examples it may be remarked, the long pauſe is at the end of the firſt

principal member, where the dash is inserted, and that the pause ought to be longer or shorter, according to the length or shortness of the first member.

2. Members of sentences which form perfect sense, and are followed by other members which form perfect sense likewise, ought to be terminated by a long pause.

In Egypt we still see their pyramids, which answer to the descriptions that have been made of them;——and I question not but a traveller might find some remains of the labyrinth that covered a whole province, and had a hundred temples disposed among its several quarters and divisions. Spect. No. 415.

The long pause in this sentence ought to be at *them*.

3. When the nominative case consists of more than one word, insert a short pause.

A man of a polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures that the vulgar are not capable of receiving. Spect. No. 411.

Here there ought to be a short pause at *imagination*, though seldom or never seen in printing.

4. When

4. When a member intervenes between the nominative and the verb, it ought to be ſeparated from them by a pauſe.

Ovid—in his Metamorphoſis, has ſhown us how the imagination may be affected by what is ſtrange. Spect. 417.

5. When a member intervenes between the verb and the accuſative caſe, we ought to ſeparate it from them by a pauſe.

We are ſtruck,—we know not how,—with the ſymmetry of any thing we ſee, and immediately aſſent to the beauty of an object, without enquiring into the particular cauſes and occaſions of it. Spect. No. 411.

6. When two verbs come together, and the latter is in the infinitive mood, whatever words intervene muſt be ſeparated from the latter verb by a pauſe.

Now becauſe our inward paſſions and inclinations can never make themſelves viſible, it is impoſſible for a jealous man, to be thoroughly cured of his ſuſpicions. Spect. No. 170.

7. Whatever words are put into the caſe abſolute, muſt be ſeparated from the reſt by a pauſe.

If a man borrow ought of his neighbour, and it be hurt or die, the owner thereof not being with it, he ſhall ſurely make it good.

Here *the owner thereof not being with it*, is the phraſe called the ablative abſolute, and this, like a parentheſis, muſt be ſeparated from the reſt of the ſentence by a ſhort pauſe on each ſide.

8. If an adverb is placed after the verb, and conſiſts but of one word, it muſt be ſeparated from what follows by a pauſe.

He did not act *prudently*, in one of the moſt important affairs of life, and therefore could not expect to be happy.

9. If the adverb conſiſts of more words than one, or forms what is called an adverbial phraſe, it ought to be ſeparated both from the verb and what follows, by a pauſe.

Thus man is, by nature, directed to correct, *in ſome meaſure*, that diſtribution of things, which ſhe herſelf would otherwiſe have made. Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments.

10. Words or phraſes in appoſition, or when the latter only explains the former have a ſhort pauſe between them.

Goddeſs of the lyre,
Which rules the accents of the moving ſpheres,

Wilt

Wilt thou, *eternal Harmony*, deſcend
And join this feſtive train?

11. When two ſubſtantives come together, and the latter, which is in the genitive caſe, conſiſts of ſeveral words cloſely united with each other, a pauſe is admiſſible between the two principal ſubſtantives.

We may obſerve, that any ſingle circumſtance, of what we have formerly ſeen often raiſes up a whole ſcene of imagery, and awakens numberleſs ideas that before ſlept in the imagination. Spect. No. 417.

A pauſe in this paſſage is admiſſible at *circumſtance*.

I do not know whether I am ſingular in my opinion, but for my own part I would rather look upon a tree in all its luxuriancy and diffuſion of boughs and branches, than when it is cut and trimmed into a mathematical figure. Ib. No. 415.

Correct reading would admit of a pauſe in this example, rather at *diffuſion*, than at *luxuriancy*.

12. *Who* and *which*, when relative pronouns, and *that*, when it ſtands for *who*

and *which*, always admit of a pauſe before them.

Vanity is the foundation of the moſt ridiculous and contemptible vices, the vices of affectation and common lying; follies which, if experience did not teach us how common they are, one ſhould imagine the leaſt ſpark of common ſenſe would ſave us from. Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments.

The word *which*, in this paſſage, that ought to have a pauſe before it, has one after it; this latter pauſe is certainly proper, as a member intervenes between *which* and the governing words, and printers never fail placing this laſt pauſe, but almoſt as uniformly neglect a pauſe before the relative in this ſituation, though the pauſe before will be acknowledged by every judicious ear to be as neceſſary in the one caſe as in the other. A pauſe before theſe relatives ought never to be omitted, as we are certain by this pauſe never to hurt the ſenſe, and are ſure to gain time, breath, and foreſight to proceed. The uncertainty of printers in this eſſential pauſe may be gueſſed at from the punctuation of a

paſſage

paſſage which follows *that* which I have juſt quoted.

The fooliſh liar, who endeavours to excite the admiration of the company by the relation of adventures which never had any exiſtence, the important coxcomb who gives himſelf airs of rank and diſtinction which he well knows he has no juſt pretenſions to, are both of them no doubt pleaſed with the applauſe which they fancy they meet with. Ib. p. 192.

In this paſſage we only ſee a pauſe before the firſt relative; but why that is diſtinguiſhed it is not very eaſy to gueſs. This rule is of greater extent than at firſt appears, for there are ſeveral words uſually called adverbs, which include in them the power of the relative pronoun, and will therefore admit of a pauſe before them: ſuch as, *when*, *why*, *wherefore*, *how*, *where*, *whither*, *whether*, *whence*, *while*, *till*, or *untill:* for *when* is equivalent to *the time at which—why* or *wherefore*, is equivalent to *the reaſon for which*, and ſo of the reſt. It muſt however be noted, that when a prepoſition comes before one of theſe relatives, the pauſe is before the prepoſition; and that if any of theſe words

words are the laſt word of the ſentence, or clauſe of a ſentence, that no pauſe is admitted before them, as, *I have read the book, of which I have heard ſo much commendation, but I know not the reaſon why. I have heard one of the books much commended, but I cannot tell which*, &c.

It muſt likewiſe be remarked, that if the ſubſtantive which governs the relative, and makes it aſſume the genitive caſe, comes before it, no pauſe is to be placed either before *which*, or the prepoſition that governs it.

The paſſage of the Jordan is a figure of baptiſm, by the grace *of which*, the new-born Chriſtian paſſes from the ſlavery of ſin into a ſtate of freedom peculiar to the choſen ſons of God. Abridgment of the Bible.

I cannot better conclude theſe few rules than by quoting a few obſervations in the critical Review, where the writer, examining Elements of Elocution, takes occaſion to throw in ſome rules of his own, which ſhow him to be a maſter of the ſubject.

" Sentences in general," ſays this judicious critic, " require a comma or a pauſe where

" there

" there is a connective particle, or a word in-
" troducing a new member, which may be ſe-
" parated from the preceding part.

" 1. All conjunctions are, as it were, the
" joints where the body of a ſentence ought to
" be divided. For inſtance, I am convinced,
" *that* it is a miſtake. I am informed, *that* you
" are the author. I wiſh to know, *whether*
" you intend to go to Italy, or not. I ſhall
" be ſatisfied, *when* I have ſeen the original.
" I ſhall keep it, *if* you pleaſe. I ſhall ſtay,
" *but* you may return. He has finiſhed it, *as*
" you directed. I will ſet out immediately, *leſt*
" I be too late. He will continue there, *till* the
" end of Auguſt, &c.

" 2. Relative pronouns, may generally admit
" a comma or a ſmall pauſe before them: as,
" The author, *who* wrote on that ſubject. The
" tree, *which* grows in the garden. The lady,
" *whom* I ſaw at Paris. The fruit of that
" forbidden tree, *whoſe* mortal taſte. The fo-
" lio volume, *that* lies on the table, &c.

" 3. If a prepoſition is prefixed to the pro-
" noun, the pauſe is before the prepoſition.
" For inſtance: The room, *in which* I am ſit-
" ing. The gentleman, *with whom* I am ac-
" quainted. The country, *from which* he came.
" The prize, *for which* he contends, &c."

Short

Short as theſe obſervations are, they appear to me to have great merit. Conſidering conjunctions as the joints of a ſentence, and thence inferring the propriety of a pauſe before them, is an idea that ariſes from a philoſophical view of the ſubject, and is of more real value than a volume of looſe florid declamation, which, by never deſcending to particulars, leaves the reader juſt where it found him.

To exemplify ſtill farther the rules which have been laid down, I ſhall inſert a paſſage from the Spectator, pointed as I imagine it ought to be, in order to read it with propriety. This paſſage will furniſh us with a rule of great extent and uſe, and that is, When one object, is ſucceſſively contraſted with another, though theſe objects form the nominative caſe to the verb, and conſiſt but of a ſingle word, it is neceſſary to pauſe after each, in order to ſhow the contraſt more diſtinctly.

At the ſame time, that I think diſcretion, the moſt uſeful talent, a man can be maſter of,

I look

I look upon cunning, to be the accompliſhment, of little, mean, ungenerous minds. Diſcretion, points out the nobleſt ends to us, and purſues the moſt proper, and laudable methods, of attaining them: cunning, has only private, ſelfiſh aims, and ſticks at nothing, which may make them ſucceed. Diſcretion, has large, and extended views, and, like a well-formed eye, commands a whole horizon: cunning, is a kind of ſhort-ſightedneſs, that diſcovers the minuteſt objects, that are near at hand, but is not able to diſcern things, at a diſtance. Diſcretion, the more it is diſcovered, gives a greater authority, to the perſon, who poſſeſſes it: cunning, when it is once detected, loſes its force, and makes a man, incapable of bringing about, even thoſe events, which he might have done, had he paſſed, only for a plain man. Diſcretion, is the perfection of reaſon, and a guide to us, in all the duties of life: cunning, is a kind of inſtinct, that only looks out, after our immediate intereſt and welfare. Diſcretion, is only found in men of ſtrong ſenſe, and good underſtandings: cunning, is often to be met with, in brutes themſelves, and in perſons, who are but the feweſt removes from them: in ſhort, Cunning, is only the mimic of Diſcretion, and may paſs upon weak men, in the ſame manner, as vivacity, is

often

often miſtaken for wit, and gravity, for wiſdom. Spectator, No. 225.

Thoſe who have but a ſuperficial knowledge of reading, will I doubt not, imagine, that I have inſerted above twice the number of points that are neceſſary; but thoſe who are better acquainted with the art, will, I flatter myſelf, agree with me that a diſtinct, a deliberate and eaſy pronunciation, will find employment for every one of them. Much undoubtedly will depend upon the turn of voice, with which we accompany theſe points; and if this is but properly adapted, the ſenſe will be ſo far from ſuffering by ſo many pauſes, that it will be greatly improved and inforced. And this leads us to a conſideration of another very important part of delivery, which is, the ſtreſs or emphaſis which is to be placed on certain words in a ſentence, agreeably to their peculiar import and ſignification.

EMPHA-

EMPHASIS.

THE general idea of emphaſis is that of force; but all force is not emphaſis properly ſo called. Many ſentences, nay all perhaps, have ſome words pronounced with greater force than others, and yet are not on that account emphatical. Thus in the following ſentence: "To be *ever active* in *laudable purſuits* is the *diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic* of a *man of merit*." In this ſentence there is a very perceptible difference in the force with which we pronounce the words printed in Italics, and the others; and yet nothing can be more certain than that there is not an emphatical word in the whole ſentence. If we watch our pronunciation of theſe words, we ſhall find that the ſmaller words are pronounced exactly with that ſubordinate force with which the unaccented ſyllables of the other words are heard: Thus, *to be ever*, ſounds like *whoſoever*; *in laudable*, like

like *illaudable*; *is the diſtinguiſhing*, like *contradiſtinguiſhing*; *of a man*, like *caravan*; and *of merit*, like *demerit*. That is, *To be* has the ſame feebleneſs as *Whoſo*, the prepoſition *in* is as feeble as the firſt ſyllable of *il-laudable*, and ſo of the reſt. It is not, therefore, merely pronouncing ſome words with greater force than the reſt, that properly conſtitutes emphaſis.

But it will be demanded, In what then, does emphatic force conſiſt? It may be anſwered, it conſiſts in pronouncing ſome word or words with greater force than thoſe words, which though not emphatical, have a greater force than the articles, prepoſitions, and conjunctions. Thus, in the following line of Shakeſpeare: "*Cowards die many times before their deaths.*" If, without any regard to the reſt of this paſſage, we pronounce it as one independent ſentence, and lay an equal ſtreſs upon *Cowards*, *die*, *many*, *before*, and *deaths*, and throw the words *times* and *their* into the obſcurity or feebleneſs before obſerved, we ſhall find the ſentence has no emphaſis: but if we pronounce

nounce the word *before* with a greater force than the reſt, and ſink the word *deaths* into the ſame feebleneſs as the word *their*, we ſhall find an emphaſis ariſe perfectly ſuitable to the ſenſe of the paſſage: that is, it will imply that cowards do not only die at a ſtated time, like others, but before that time. In this ſentence too, as in the former, we may obſerve that the word *times* is pronounced exactly with the ſame feebleneſs as the ſame word in *oftentimes*, and that the three words *before their deaths*, when the emphaſis is placed on *before*, ſound exactly like a word of three ſyllables with the accent on the firſt. From this view of emphaſis, we find there is a threefold diſtinction of words with regard to the force with which they are pronounced; namely, the conjunctions, particles, and words underſtood, which are obſcurely and feebly pronounced; the ſubſtantives, verbs, and more ſignificant words, which are firmly and diſtinctly pronounced; and the emphatical word, which is forcibly pronounced: it is the laſt only which can

be properly ſtyled emphaſis, and it is to a diſcovery of the nature and cauſe of this emphaſis, that all our attention ought to be directed.

And firſt we may obſerve, that if theſe diſtinctions are juſt, the common definition of emphaſis is very faulty. Emphaſis is ſaid to be a ſtreſs laid on one or more words to diſtinguiſh them from others: but this definition, as we have juſt ſeen, makes almoſt every word in a ſentence emphatical, and, at the ſame time, confounds the diſtinction between words which have force from a peculiarity of meaning, and thoſe which have force from having only more meaning than the particles.

The next enquiry that preſents itſelf is, what are the words on which we are to place this empharic force? The common anſwer to this queſtion is, on ſuch words as have ſo forcible a meaning as to require a more forcible pronunciation: but as this anſwer amounts to no more than what we knew before, and does not convey the leaſt information, we ſhall endeavour

deavour to point out what thoſe words are.

The principal circumſtance that diſtinguiſhes emphatical words from others, ſeems to be a meaning which points out, or diſtinguiſhes, ſomething as diſtinct or oppoſite to ſome other thing. When this oppoſition is expreſſed in words, it forms an antitheſis, the oppoſite parts of which are always emphatical. Thus in the following couplet from Pope:

'Tis hard to ſay, if greater want of ſkill
Appear in writing or in judging ill.

The words *writing* and *judging* are oppoſed to each other, and are therefore the emphatical words: where we may likewiſe obſerve, that the disjunctive *or*, by which the antitheſis is connected, means one of the things excluſively of the other; the ſame may be obſerved in a paſſage from Maſon, in his Elegy in a Country Church-yard, where, foretelling what ſome hoary-headed ſwain will ſay of him when he lies numbered among th' unhonor'd dead, whoſe artleſs tale he has ſo well related,—he ſays

One morn I miſs'd him on th' accuſtom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came, nor yet beſide the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he.
The next with dirges due, in ſad array,
Slow thro' the church-way path we ſaw him borne;
Approach and read (for *thou canſt* read) the lay,
Grav'd on the ſtone beneath yon aged thorn.

Here the words *thou canſt* are emphatical, as they are evidently oppoſed to *I cannot*, which are underſtood;—a very beautiful way of hinting the ſimplicity of the ſwain from his ignorance of the written characters of his language.

In theſe inſtances, the oppoſition ſuggeſted by the emphatical word is pretty evident; in other caſes, perhaps, the antitheſis is not quite ſo obvious, but if an emphaſis can be laid on any word, we may be aſſured *that* word is in antitheſis with ſome meaning agreeable to the general ſenſe of the paſſage.

To illuſtrate this, let us pronounce a line of Marcus in Cato, where, expreſſing his indignation at the behaviour of Cæſar, he ſays:

I'm tortur'd ev'n to madneſs, when I *think*
Of the proud victor ——

And

And we ſhall find the greateſt ſtreſs fall naturally on that word, which ſeems oppoſed to ſome common or general meaning; for the young hero does not ſay in the common and unemphatic ſenſe of the word *think*, that he is tortured even to madneſs when he thinks on Cæſar; but in the ſtrong and emphatic ſenſe of this word; which implies, not only "when I hear or "diſcourſe of him, but even when I think "of him I am tortur'd even to madneſs." As the word *think* therefore riſes above the common level of ſignification, it is pronounced above the common level of ſound; and as this ſignification is oppoſed to a ſignification leſs forcible, the word may be properly ſaid to be emphatical.

This more than ordinary meaning, or a meaning oppoſed to ſome other meaning, ſeems to be the principal ſource of emphaſis; for if, as in the laſt inſtance, we find the words will bear this oppoſition to their common ſignification, we may be ſure they are emphatical; this will be ſtill more evident from another example:

By the faculty of a lively and picturesque imagination, a man in a dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with scenes and landskips, more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole compass of nature.

Spect. No. 111.

If we read this passage without that emphasis which the word *dungeon* requires, we enervate the meaning, and scarcely give the sense of the author; for the import plainly is, that a lively imagination, not merely absent from beautiful scenes, but even in a dungeon, can form scenes more beautiful than any in nature.

This plenitude of meaning in a particular word, is not always so prominent as to be discernible by a common reader, but wherever it really exists, the general meaning of the author is greatly enforced by emphatically pointing it out.—Let us take another example:

Steele begins one of his letters in the Spectator by the following sentence:

I have very often lamented, and hinted my sorrow in several speculations, that the art of

painting

painting is ſo little made uſe of, to the improvement of our manners. Spect. No. 226.

As in this ſentence, which is the firſt in the eſſay, it is taken from, we find a new and important object introduced, ſo if we do not pronounce it with emphaſis, it will not be ſufficiently noticed. The word *painting*, as it ſtands in this ſentence, may very well be ſuppoſed to be in contraſt with other arts, which, though often uſed for the improvement of manners, are, perhaps, not ſo conducive to that end, as this particular art: this antitheſis is perfectly underſtood if the word *painting* is made emphatical, but entirely loſt if it is pronounced feebly: nay, ſliding it over without emphaſis, will ſuppoſe the hearer pre-acquainted with the ſubject to be treated, contrary to what is really the caſe; this will be ſtill more apparent by pronouncing it both ways; firſt, without the proper ſtreſs on the word *painting*, and afterwards with it.

I have very often lamented, and hinted my ſorrow in ſeveral ſpeculations, that the art of

painting is ſo little made uſe of to the improvement of our manners.

I have very often lamented, and hinted my ſorrow in ſeveral ſpeculations, that the art of *painting* is ſo little made uſe of to the improvement of our manners.

In all theſe inſtances we find every emphatical word placed in oppoſition as it were to ſome meaning which it ſeems to exclude.

Wherever the contrariety or oppoſition is expreſſed, we are at no loſs for the emphatical words; the greateſt difficulty in reading, lies in a diſcovery of thoſe words which are in oppoſition to ſomething not expreſſed, but underſtood; and the beſt method to find the emphaſis in theſe ſentences, is to take the word we ſuppoſe to be emphatical, and try whether it will admit of thoſe words being ſupplied, which an emphaſis on it would ſuggeſt: if, when theſe words are ſupplied, we find them not only agreeable to the meaning of the writer, but an improvement of his meaning, we may pronounce the word empha-

emphatical; but if theſe words we ſupply, are not agreeable to the meaning of the words expreſſed, or elſe give them an affected and fanciful meaning, we ought by no means to lay the emphaſis upon them: Let us take an example of both theſe kinds of emphaſis.

Mr. Addiſon, in one of his Spectators, ſhowing the advantages of good taſte, ſays,

A man of a polite imagination is let into a great many pleaſures that the vulgar are not capable of receiving; he can converſe with a picture, and find an agreeable companion in a ſtatue. Spect. No. 411.

We ſhall find but few readers lay any conſiderable ſtreſs upon the word *picture*, in this ſentence; but if we examine it by the former rule, we ſhall find a ſtreſs upon this word a conſiderable embelliſhment to the thought; for it hints to the mind that a polite imagination does not only find pleaſure in converſing with thoſe objects which give pleaſure to all, but with thoſe which give pleaſure to ſuch only as can con-

converſe with them; here then the emphaſis on the word *picture*, is not only an advantage to the thought, but in ſome meaſure neceſſary to it. This will appear ſtill more evidently by reading the paſſage both ways, as in the laſt example.

But if emphaſis does not improve, it always vitiates the ſenſe; and, therefore, ſhould be always avoided where the uſe of it is not evident: this will appear by placing an emphaſis on a word in a ſentence which does not require it.

I have ſeveral letters by me from people of good ſenſe, who lament the depravity or poverty of taſte the town is fallen into with relation to plays and public ſpectacles.

Spect. No. 228.

Now if we lay a conſiderable degree of emphaſis upon the words *good ſenſe*, it will ſtrongly ſuggeſt that the people here mentioned are not common or ordinary people, which, though not oppoſite to the meaning of the writer, does not ſeem neceſſary either to the completion or embelliſhment

of

of it; for as particularly marking theſe people out as perſons of good ſenſe, ſeems to obviate an objection that they might poſſibly be fools, and as it would not be very wiſe to ſuppoſe this objection, it would ſhow as little wiſdom to endeavour to preclude it by a more than ordinary ſtreſs; the plain words of the author, therefore, without any emphaſis on them, ſufficiently ſhow his meaning.

From theſe obſervations, the following definition of emphaſis ſeems naturally to ariſe. EMPHASIS, when applied to particular words, is THAT STRESS WE LAY ON WORDS WHICH ARE IN CONTRADISTINCTION TO OTHER WORDS EITHER EXPRESSED OR UNDERSTOOD: and hence will follow this general rule. WHEREVER THERE IS CONTRADISTINCTION IN THE SENSE OF THE WORDS, THERE OUGHT TO BE EMPHASIS IN THE PRONUNCIATION OF THEM; the converſe of this being equally true, WHEREVER WE PLACE EMPHASIS WE SUGGEST THE IDEA OF CONTRADISTINCTION.

Emphaſis

Emphaſis thus inveſtigated and defined, we may obſerve, that all words are pronounced either with emphatic force, accented force, or unaccented force; this laſt kind of force we may call by the name of feebleneſs; or, in other words, where the words are in contradiſtinction to other words, or to ſome ſenſe implied, we may call them emphatic; where they do not denote contradiſtinction and yet are more important than the particles, we may call them accented, and the particles and leſſer words we may call unaccented or feeble.

By this threefold diſtinction we are enabled to make very conſiderable advances in the methods of conveying inſtruction in reading; we cannot only mark the emphatic words as uſual, but diſtinguiſh them from the accented: theſe again may be diſtinguiſhed from the unaccented, and by theſe means we make a nearer approach to the ſenſe of compoſition, and to a method of conveying our delivery of it to others. But a ſtill greater advance remains to be made by another diſtinction: a diſtinction, which, to the former advantages

tages of marking the different degrees of force on words, adds the ſtill more ſtriking difference of inflexion of voice. This diſtinction, though obvious and palpable, is perfectly new; and cannot fail to add greatly to inſtruction in ſpeaking, as theſe two different inflexions of voice are the moſt marking and ſignificant diſtinctions of ſpeech.

But here, it will be ſaid, lies the difficulty. To what purpoſe is it, to attempt to teach us an art, when the moſt important part of it cannot be conveyed? My firſt anſwer to this objection is, that, our not being able to convey the whole of an art, is no reaſon why we may not convey as much as we can. My next is, that if more has not been conveyed, it is not ſo much owing to the nature of the art*, as to the want of

* As we can mark the pauſes by the points, and the emphatic words by printing them in Italics, it muſt certainly be no ſmall aſſiſtance to reading, to be able to mark theſe pauſes and emphatic words, with ſuch a turn of voice, as the ſenſe demands; and

of ſtudying it, as we do other arts. A knowledge of the human voice forms an eſſential part of the art of ſpeaking and reading; but ſo little has it been ſtudied, that we want words to expreſs our ideas on the ſubject. We are amuſed with florid declamation, on the inſufficiency of the points, and that infinite variety of tone, which good reading demands; but have no direction given us, no method pointed out, that may aſſiſt us in acquiring, what, it is acknowledged on all hands, is very difficult to learn. When we want to gain the uſe of a muſical inſtrument, we are not only inſtructed in the nature of muſic, but are made acquainted with the power and properties of the inſtrument itſelf: without this it would be impoſſible to attain our end: but reading and ſpeaking, which is a ſpecies of inſtrumental muſic, are generally taught, without the leaſt acquaintance, with the nature of the inſtrument we play upon: Hence

that this is practicable, is demonſtrated at large in Elements of Elocution.

Hence it follows, that high and low, are ſo often confounded with loud and ſoft; and hence it is likewiſe, that we have not a name in common uſe, for that upward and downward ſlide of the voice, without which, a ſpeaking ſound cannot be formed, and from which ſo much of the preciſion and variety of ſpeaking ſounds ariſe. Every one, who underſtands the human voice, knows, that every ſound it utters * muſt either ſlide upwards or downwards, or continue in a monotone: and, that, whatever variety of high, low; loud, ſoft; quick, or ſlow; is ſuperadded, they muſt all be neceſſarily pronounced either with the upward, or downward ſlide of the voice, or in a monotone: and how aſtoniſhing is it, that, in teaching to read or ſpeak, a knowledge of theſe eſſential qualities of the voice, ſhould never yet have made the leaſt part of the inſtruction! We can tell a pupil he is too high, too low; too loud, too ſoft; too quick, or too ſlow; but we have no way to con-

* Smith's Harmonies, p. 3. Note (c).

conveying to him his error, if he makes uſe of a wrong ſlide of the voice, though this may actually be the caſe where he is without fault in every other particular; that is, there may be a wrong ſlide of the voice upon a particular word, though it is neither pronounced too high, too low; too loud, too ſoft; too quick, nor too ſlow. Let us ſuppoſe, for example, the following ſentence to be pronounced, *I would rather converſe with you than with the king*; I might tell the pupil, he muſt lay a particular ſtreſs, on the two emphatical words, *you* and *king*; but unleſs I can convey to him the ſlide with which theſe words are to be pronounced, I do not inform him, whether I mean the ſentence as a compliment, or a ſarcaſm. If he uſes the upward ſlide on *you*, and the downward on *king*, a compliment is conveyed; but if theſe ſlides are tranſpoſed, the ſentence becomes the ſevereſt ſarcaſm.

But it may be demanded, what are theſe ſlides, which are ſo uſeful in reading, and how are they to be known? I

anſwer,

anſwer, by ſtudying the voice as muſicians do the gamut*. When we converſe with rapidity, there may be a variety upon the whole, but the ſlides upon particular words, may be ſo ſhort and quick, as ſcarcely to be diſtinguiſhable: but as we fall into a more deliberate and ſolemn pronunciation, the ſlides become more and more perceptible; and as we drawl out our words, the ear diſtinguiſhes them with eaſe. One of the beſt methods to diſcover the ſlide of a word is to put it into a queſtion with the disjunctive conjunction *or*. Thus, for inſtance; if I wiſh to know the ſlide on the firſt *you* in the foregoing ſentence which makes it ſarcaſtical, I put it into this queſtion: *Is it you or you*. Theſe words, if pronounced without premeditation, will naturally adopt the riſing ſlide on the firſt *you*, and the falling on the laſt; and it is this laſt ſlide which is evidently that, which a ſarcaſtic

* For the purpoſe of acquiring a knowledge of theſe ſlides, ſee a ſcale of ſlides or inflexions of the voice in Elements of Elocution, vol. 1. p. 137.

pronunciation of the former ſentence requires on the *you* in queſtion.

I know it will be objected, that if a knowledge of theſe ſlides are at all difficult to attain, they will rather embarraſs than aſſiſt the learner. What need have we, it will be ſaid, to perplex ourſelves with theſe diſtinctions of the voice, when the ear requires nothing more, than to hear good pronunciation, to be enabled to imitate it? This objection is ſpecious, but not ſolid. It proves too much. A tune may be learned, by a perſon who does not underſtand muſic, infinitely quicker by the ear only, than by previouſly acquiring a knowledge of the notes: but none will contend, that when once muſic is learned, we do not more readily and accurately acquire a tune. In the ſame manner, the pronunciation of any given portion of compoſition, may, in a ſhorter time, be learned by the ear, than by any other method; but none ſurely will deny, that, in the abſence of the maſter, an accurate punctuation, with

with occaſional marks on the emphatic words, may greatly facilitate the acquiſition. Thoſe muſical inſtruments, the parts of which are ſo contrived, as to give certain determinate notes, upon the application of the finger, may be learned, in ſome degree, without a maſter; in the ſame manner, let the ear be acquainted with the diſtinction of the voice, into the riſing and falling ſlide, and it can immediately annex this ſlide to a pauſe, or emphatic word, by only ſeeing it marked upon paper.

If, therefore, this obvious diſtinction of the voice, were once underſtood and attended to, we ſhould have a notation of ſpeaking ſounds, which would enable us, to converſe about them at a diſtance, and to give inſtructions for reading, in ſome meaſure, as we do for ſinging. Thus, we could tell a correſpondent, that the verſe in the Proverbs of Solomon, which ſo admirably diſcovers the depravity of human nature, would loſe half its force, if not pronounced with the fall-

ing ſlide on the words *waters* and *bread*. " *Stolen* wàters *are ſweet, and* brèad *eaten in ſecret is pleaſant :*" and this falling ſlide might be eaſily expreſſed, by the grave accent as in the example. If writing to a friend, upon the well-known paſſage in Pope,

A little learning is a dangerous thing,
Drink deep, or taſte not the Pierian ſpring;
There ſhàllow draughts intóxicate the brain,
And drinking largely ſobers us again.

I might tell him that I thought the ſenſe would be better expreſſed, and the harmony better preſerved by laying the emphaſis with the falling ſlide on *ſhallow*, and that with the riſing on *intoxicate*, contrary to the common method. If this diſtinction of voice were once underſtood, my friend would immediately underſtand what I meant, and would read it accordingly: but without this diſtinction of emphaſis into two kinds, the riſing and falling, I could not poſſibly make him underſtand me without actually pronouncing the line in his hearing.

If

If I wiſhed to convey that dignity and ſolemnity, with which almoſt two lines in Milton's deſcription of the grandeur of Satan's throne, ought to be repeated; I might ſay, they ought to be pronounced in a monotone: and, for that purpoſe, might adopt the horizontal line, uſed commonly for the mark of long quantity.

High on a throne of royal ſtate, which far
Outſhone the wealth of Ormus, or of Inde;
Or whēre the gōrgeous ēaſt with rīcheſt hānd
Shōw'rs on her kīngs barbāric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted ſat. ———

Thus by this ſimple diſtinction of the voice, into the riſing and falling ſlide, and the monotone, we are enabled to mark upon paper, that ſpecific turn of voice, which a pauſe, an emphatical word, or a ſeries of words requires. Let a perſon, therefore, who wiſhes to improve himſelf in reading, make himſelf maſter, of theſe three different properties of the voice, ſo as to be able, to form them himſelf, and to diſtinguiſh them when he hears

hears them, and he may mark down the pronunciation of a good reader or ſpeaker, as far as relates to theſe modifications of the voice, and by this means, be poſſeſſed of a model, for imitation and improvement.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

THE END.

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